

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

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AMCONSUL IZMIR

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CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN ABFGER

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EO 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTEILEADER WARNS

DEMIREL GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) LEADER ECEVIT
WARNED DEMIREL GOVERNMENT THAT RPP, WHILE PLAYING MODERATE
OPPOSITION ROLE, WOULD NOT HESITATE TO WORK TO BRING DOWN
GOVERNMENT IF TURKISH NATIONAL INTERESTS HARMED. ALLEGING
CORRUPTION IN CONFIDENCE VOTE, ECEVIT REMINDED COALITION THAT
ONLY EIGHT DEFECTIONS NECESSARY TO BRING DOWN GOVERNMENT.
END SUMMARY

1. IN HIS FIRST MAJOR SPEECH SINCE SULEYMAN DEMIREL'S
NATIONALIST FRONT GOVERNMENT WON ITS PARLIAMENTARY VOTE OF
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CONFIDENCE APRIL 12, RPP LEADER BULENT ECEVIT TOLD THE

RPP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP APRIL 15 THAT THE RPP WOULD ADOPT A POLICY OF MODERATE OPPOSITION TOWARD THE NATIONALIST FRONT, PROVIDED THAT THE DEMIREL COALITION REMEMBERED THAT IT WAS A "MINORITY GOVERNMENT."

2. STATING THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT RESTED UPON "WEAK AND ROTTEN FOUNDATIONS", ECEVIT NOTED THAT THE COALITION HAD FAILED TO RECEIVE EVEN A SIMPLE MAJORITY OF THE OCCUPIED PARLIAMENTARY SEATS (224 VOTES). SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT SEEM TO BE ACTING AGAINST THE NATIONAL INTEREST, ECEVIT SAID THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE ONLY EIGHT MEN "WITHOUT GAMBLING DEBTS OR WEAKNESSES EXPLOITABLE BY BIG PROFITEERS" IN ORDER TO UNSEAT THE COALITION. ECEVIT WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "WE ALL KNOW THAT MILLIONS WERE SPENT" IN THE EFFORT TO INFLUENCE THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, AND STRESSED THAT THE RPP HAD EMERGED UNTAINTED FROM THE CAMPAIGN, INCREASING ITS MEMBERSHIP WHILE ONE PARTY (THE REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY) HAD LOST ITS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP.

3. ECEVIT ALSO ACCUSED THE DEMIREL COALITION OF PARTISANSHIP IN MAKING CHANGES AT HIGH LEVELS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, AND WARNED THAT IF TROUBLES BROKE OUT AMONG YOUTH, THE RPP WOULD BLAME DEMIREL AS GOVERNMENT HEAD INSTEAD OF NATIONAL ACTION PARTY (NAP) LEADER TURKES (WHOSE "COMMANDO" FOLLOWERS HAVE BEEN IMPLICATED IN RECENT STUDENT CLASHES). IN THE SAME SPEECH, THE RPP CHAIRMAN CRITICIZED THE COALITION'S MONTH-BY-MONTH ECONOMIC PLANS, SAYING THAT SINCE THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO FUTURE, IT COULD NOT PLAN LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE ECEVIT'S ASSURANCES THAT THE RPP INTENDS TO PLAY A MODERATE ROLE IN OPPOSITION, HIS SPEECH ASSAILS THE GOVERNMENT IN STRONGER TERMS THAN HE HAS USED PREVIOUSLY. HIS MENTION OF "EIGHT HONEST MEN" REFERS TO THE EIGHT-VOTE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE 218 VOTES CAST AGAINST THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT APRIL 12 AND THE 226 VOTES (A MAJORITY OF THE TOTAL SEATS RATHER THAN OF THE MEMBERS PRESENT) THAT WOULD BE NEEDED TO UNSEAT THE GOVERNMENT UNDER TURKISH CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS. MACOMBER

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